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A QUARTERLY OF CATHOLIC THOUGHT

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

THE CUBAN FAILURE

THE ATTEMPT TO unseat the government of Fidel Castro was accompanied by widespread cheering in the United States. The cheers were premature, it turns out, and the expressions of hope and satisfaction seem cruelly ironic in the face of the disaster the invasion attempt became.

Yet the sentiments which were expressed would have been right and reasonable except for one thing—the fundamental assumption on which all the comments were based. This assumption was that the people of Cuba were chafing under the tyrant's yoke and that they would immediately align themselves with any attempt to remove him from power.

It was obvious all along that the U.S. course of active encouragement and support for the anti-Castro forces was fraught with danger. If a U.S.-sponsored rebellion should fail, there was the likelihood of harsh retribution against any Cubans whose loyalty to Castro had wavered. There was the probability that an unsuccessful revolution would strengthen the present regime in Cuba and would drive it even closer to the Soviet Union and Communist China. Then there was the large possibility of damage to U.S. prestige among the Latin American nations and throughout the world.

This much was clear to anyone who troubled to read the newspapers. Thus when President Kennedy decided to follow the policy formulated under President Eisenhower, the presumption had to be that the President had access to additional, secret information about the situation in Cuba. The presumption had to be that the Administration had knowledge of facts and plans that added up to a serious and immediate threat to U.S. security and that conditions in Cuba made the anti-Castro invasion likely to be successful. Without the benefit of this secret information, the ordinarily informed citizen found it hard to evaluate the policy which we adopted.

At any rate, the decision was made to lend our assistance to the anti-Castro rebels, and it is clear now that it was a bad decision in every way. To begin with, the Central Intelligence Agency has been found wrong again, guilty again of the wishful thinking and self-deception that led us disastrously astray in Laos and Vietnam.

What made the situation even worse was the fact that the Administration decision was hypocritically expressed and half-heartedly implemented. With all the assurances that the U.S. would "under no circumstances" intervene, our government was in fact quite deeply involved in the operation. And although we were committed far enough to cloud our national honor and revive the old charges of imperialism, we would not commit ourselves sufficiently to guarantee the success of the expedition we were backing, or even to save it from the miserable conclusion it had. Wanting the best of two worlds, President Kennedy has instead reaped the worst of both.

THE UNITED STATES has suffered a serious defeat, in Cuba, in Latin America and in the world. Finding scapegoats, as the President has made clear, is not what is called for. What is called for is a sober examination of the likely consequences of this defeat.

The first consequence apparently will be a long overdue examination of the C.I.A., and an overhauling of our entire intelligence-gathering apparatus is certainly a consummation devoutly to be wished. The second apparent consequence of the Cuban misfortune is a remarkable change in President Kennedy's attitude toward America's

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foreign policy needs, and this development seems not good at all.

Caught in a bad position, red-handed, so to speak, in an action of dubious legality and inept execution, the Administration has fallen back upon bluster, defiance and threats, which is a tactic typical of Khrushchev and the Communists but one which should not be typical of the United States. The declaration that the U.S. will consider itself justified in taking direct action whenever it thinks its security is threatened, regardless of what others may think, is all too reminiscent of Soviet pronouncements, and must be alarming and distasteful to Latin Americans certainly, to our allies, to every nation in the world. The reference to "lectures on intervention" and the "bloody streets of Budapest" was hardly felicitous. For us to say "You're another" to the Communist butchers is to do precisely what they have done: equate our actions in Cuba and elsewhere with their own ruthless intervention in Hungary and other places. And our defiant entry into the world of *Realpolitik* must be ironic to the British and all those to whom we have for so long read "lectures on intervention." Have we forgotten Suez so soon?

Most disturbing in President Kennedy's speech on the Cuban debacle was the apparent—and uncharacteristic—acceptance of an outlook which veered perilously close to the fear-based devil-theory of international politics. This view is based on the myth that Communists are all eight feet tall, and that Communism is a fearful doctrine which sweeps all before it. The fact is that, far from being an irresistible ideological force, Communism as doctrine has had no success whatever since the end of World War II. The expansion of the Communist empire has been accomplished not by the insidious spread of Marxian ideas but by the use of conventional and down-to-earth strategy involving military force, or by trade treaties and aid programs which made accurate assessments of the needs and hopes of the peoples involved.

As President Kennedy himself has often reminded us, the United States has interests and goals which are large, difficult and pressing. Among our tasks is the maintenance of security against military, economic and political pressures exerted by our rivals. But surely countering Communist moves does not encompass our entire national concern, nor will it by itself accomplish our national goals. Let us work for our own objectives, with all the coolness and strength we can muster, and not be hypnotized and panicked by the specter of Communism, in Cuba or anywhere else.

THE GENERALS' COUP

IT IS DIFFICULT to see what the French generals actually hoped to accomplish by seizing power in Algiers and the principal military posts. Temporary control even of all the French forces there can lead nowhere. It does, of course, make things incalculably more difficult for General de Gaulle, ingratiate them with the colons and perhaps delay the negotiations with the Algerian nationalists a little longer. Yet it has increased the Moslems' confidence in de Gaulle and heightened the demand for negotiations.

In Algeria itself what can these desperate men achieve? At present writing they appear to have won control of all the chief army centers; they control the strategic airfields and have things generally in hand. These retired and still active French army officers, however, appear to ignore the present state of mind of the African and other colonial peoples and seem oblivious of the stage that has been reached in the Algerian struggle for independence. Moreover, they have yet to contend with a reaction as violent as last year's on the part of the local Moslem population. Do they imagine that they can reverse the tide of nationalism in Algeria by a simple show of force?

In France itself the army coup has slimmer prospects still. Possibly, if the intended drops of parachutists had gone off as scheduled, the insurgents would have greatly profited from an element of surprise that is no longer at their disposal. Even then the people of France would have rallied to eject them. As it is now, the dictatorial powers assumed by de Gaulle in accordance with the new French Constitution are backed by the tremendous moral force which he—and he alone—now exercises. The General has the bulk of the French people firmly supporting him in this deep crisis: the workers, the intellectuals, peasants and city-dwellers, virtually all the political parties.

Where, then, can the rebel generals turn for any aid and support? Apparently living in a world all their own, they now find themselves wholly isolated. Whether General Salan made a genuine escape from confinement in Madrid, or whether the Spanish authorities negligently or deliberately made it possible for him to join his companions-at-arms in Algiers, his escape supplies little evidence of effective support for the insurgents in the world outside.

More than two-thirds of the French soldiers in Algeria are said to be conscripts who have to think of their civilian future in metropolitan France.

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If at first they were loath to violate the code of the army by forcibly resisting certain officers, they will tend to become more and more restive if the impasse continues. Time is hardly on the side of the rebelling generals. Meanwhile the United States and other nations are assuring General de Gaulle of unfailing moral support and confidence in his ability somehow to overcome the latest and most threatening of French-Algerian crises.

THE FIGHT'S NOT OVER

WE HAVE been told by friendly critics on more than one occasion recently that the battle of civil rights for Negroes has been won. There are still some minor skirmishes ahead, the argument goes, but all right-thinking people agree on the ultimate good of full equality for the Negro; the legal rulings of the last several years provide the means for gradually unlocking rusty and resistant barriers; and the Negro himself has shown both the will and the ability to carry through.

The implication in all this is that those who are not actually involved in the struggle can concern themselves with more important matters, confident of the happy completion of a battle whose outcome can safely be predicted. Especially is this true of those editors and columnists whose *raison d'être* is to discern and evaluate underlying forces in our society, to point out social ills and political threats and to advocate and encourage what is necessary and desirable. Their part in the battle of civil rights has been played; the vanguard of which they were once part is now the rear guard in such action or, at least, has been swallowed up in that great body which is moving inexorably toward the not too distant day when our state and society will be blind to the color of American citizens.

With due respect to the critics who advance this view, we must demur. In fact, there is much to suggest that, in spite of continuing small advances, things may get worse before they get better. One does not have to be a professional doomster to fear, for example, the extension and effects of the Black Muslim movement in this country. While one may be gratified as well as puzzled that such a movement did not materialize sooner, it is clear that its call to black supremacy is no refutation of equally foolish arguments for white supremacy—and that it is potentially dangerous.

It should also be clear that many Negroes are understandably dissatisfied with the rate of progress in their battle of equality. Other Negroes who advocate a policy of gradualism are frequently labeled as Uncle Toms; no matter what they have contributed in the past their experience and judgment are thrown into the discard along with other "outmoded and old-fashioned" ideas. While some Negroes look forward to the day when their children can participate more fully in our society, others would like to experience some of this equality in their own lives.

What is needed, in our present circumstances, is not an easy reliance on some juggernaut of social progress that, once started, can be expected to carry us along. What we face now as citizens is a prolonged series of discrete but related struggles in which all our resources of intelligence and moral judgment must be available. This is at some distance, admittedly, from the dramatic proclamation of the moral bases for opposing segregation. This is the more demanding, less immediately rewarding task of making many individual judgments where there are no simple solutions, where justice seems an uneasy guest, where even the closest attention and the finest judgments are insufficient. But such attention, such judgment is needed. And that is the whole point: they are needed today more than ever.

POOR POLLYANNA

IT HAS proved difficult for any American to play Pollyanna these last few weeks. On almost every front, Communism has seemed to advance, the Western democracies to blunder and fail. Yet one story did suggest a silver lining for the deep, dark clouds on the political horizon.

Paradoxically, the few silver gleams came from the globe-circling feat of cosmonaut Gagarin. There were skeptics in this country who doubted that Major Gagarin ever made the trip. And on the basis of Soviet reports they could build a good case. But Dr. Frank Press, a member of the President's Science Advisory Committee, said that "there is no doubt in the minds of any knowledgeable person in this field that the Russians did what they said they did."

Behind the statement of Dr. Press, it is now clear, is a wide-flung, sensitive, reliable monitoring system that provides our information services with a continual report on launchings and landings around the globe. In other words, we do not have to rely upon the Russians for information about such flights as Major Gagarin's. This is a pretty thin lining for the many dark clouds, but even Pollyanna has a rough time these days.

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CREEPING BIRCHITIS

LAST WEEK I wrote about Robert Welch and his John Birch Society. By this time, after all the publicity on the subject, I suppose a good many people are getting bored with it. For me, though, the John Birch Society remains a fascinating phenomenon.

How is one to account for a group like this? No matter what Robert Welch says, it is simply ridiculous to explain our troubles by saying that Dwight D. Eisenhower, Harry Truman, Allen Dulles, *et al.*, are either "conscious, dedicated agents" or "tools of Communism." Such charges are so palpably false and unsupported by evidence that no reasonable person could give them a second thought. Yet followers of the John Birch line apparently do take such nonsense seriously, and I am interested in why this should be so.

The answer has to be, I think, fear. It is only on this basis, at least, that I am able to make any sense out of the support that extremist groups like the John Birch Society are able to get in our society.

There is, of course, nothing wrong with fear, as long as it is not excessive and as long as it is aimed in the right direction. Back in depression days, Franklin Delano Roosevelt said we have nothing to fear but fear itself. That may have been true then; it is not true today. Communism is something to fear, and a sensible person will recognize this. But the positions taken by the John Birch Society are so irrational that it is hard to imagine what the Communists could have invented that would have been a bigger help to their cause.

Look at the situation. Marxist ideology backed by Soviet power confronts Western civilization with its gravest challenge in centuries, perhaps in history. To meet it successfully will require our best efforts, and we are unlikely to see the end of the struggle in our lifetime. But what is the response of the Birchers and their allies to this situation?

Is there serious doubt that NATO forces are strong enough to check a possible Soviet advance into Western Europe? The Birch answer is to take United States troops out of NATO. Do the Communists want to wreck the United Nations? The Birch reply is to beat them to the punch and ruin the U.N. by ourselves resigning. Do we need to devote more rather than less of our resources to the Communist threat? The Birch answer is to call for the abolishment of the income tax.

Are the Asian and African nations suspicious of our claims to world leadership because of racist incidents here in the U.S.? The Birch Society response is to give place of honor to white supremacists. Is informed vigilance always necessary against Communist penetration of sensitive governmental agencies? The Birchers make nonsense of such vigilance by calling everyone they disagree with a tool of Communism. Are the people of the United States, with the exception of a tiny minority, united in their opposition to Communism? The Birch answer is to sow disunity and suspicion, denouncing ministers, teachers, legislators, Presidents and former Presidents almost at random.

In the face of this, can it be said that the John Birch Society is a response to the fear of Communism? I think not. In fact, when I contemplate what the proposals of the John Birchers would do to our defense system, I feel quite sure I am more afraid of the reality of Soviet military power than they are. No, it seems to me, as John P. Sisk suggests elsewhere in this issue, that these people are not really inspired by fear of Communism; theirs is simply a general and irrational response to a society that is changing too quickly for them.

In the last four decades, the old order in the world has been transformed. To the old-line American of the rural and small-town West and South, the face of our culture must seem almost unrecognizable. Negroes and other minorities fight for their place in the American sun, and priests and ministers encourage them. Jews refuse to stay behind the ghetto wall; symbolically enough, they sit on the Supreme Court and in the President's Cabinet. Conservative Protestants fear that the power of Rome is growing; Catholics are "getting in everywhere" and one of them even occupies the White House. Conservative Catholics feel no better; the first Catholic President is a Harvard man, and a liberal, and all this talk from Rome about ecumenicism and liturgical reform makes them nervous.

On the international scene, the myth of America's omnipotence is destroyed. We say "Go," and nations do not go; we cry "Yea," and other nations vote no. Man takes the first step toward the moon, and it is not one of us; it is Soviet man. The oceans have shrunk, Russian missiles are more powerful than ours, and all is definitely not right with the world.

In the face of all this, how easy it is to blame everything on some monstrous conspiracy; how tempting to rail at everyone else, from President to local minister and librarian; how comforting to gather together and imagine that the clock of history can be turned back, perhaps even to those halcyon days before there was an income tax. How easy, how tempting, how comforting, yes—and how foolish and how dangerous. The John Birchers are entitled to our understanding, perhaps even to our sympathy; what they are not entitled to and should not receive from us is either aid or comfort.

JAMES O'GARA.

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Disease in Our Flesh

If we are ignorant of or deny part of our national heritage, that part will in time rise up to haunt us

by JOHN P. SISK

TOWARDS the end of March, the Senate passed a bill authorizing a grant of fifty-one million dollars to the states for educational television. It is quite unlikely that the House should look favorably on this legislation, but in any case I would like to suggest a more fundamental educational need.

What I am thinking of is a thorough-going education of the public in communication itself. Such a course of instruction would include an analysis of advertising, propaganda and public relations; an exposition of the nature of fact and the difference between fact and interpretation and between logic and poetry; lessons on the rules of evidence, the nature and infinite disguises of proof and the degrees and kinds of certitude; advice on how to avoid the mazes of fallacy, the horns of dilemmas and disjunctions and the confusions of hypostasized abstractions and emotional definitions.

The need for such public instruction stems from the fact that ours more than any other form of government depends upon communication. A democracy is an endless dialogue of variously contending voices, and if in the long run anything is to come of it the dialogue must be conducted with considerable intelligence and good will.

That it often is not is clear enough. There are times, such as recently in the state of Washington, when naiveté, ignorance, selfishness, suspicion and fear combine to thoroughly scramble the channels of communication. The occasion here was two films, "Operation Abolition" and "Communism on the Map." Either is capable of confusing the dialogue in any state in the union, but particularly in one such as this that once operated its own un-American activities committee.

"Operation Abolition," as the country at large knows by now, is presented as a documentrary report of the alleged riotous conduct of certain University of California students while the House Un-American Activities Committee was meeting in San Francisco last May. Its professed purpose, as stated in a prologue by chairman Francis E. Walter, is to show a typical instance of highly trained Communist organizers at work trying to discredit the H.U.A.C. It also dramatizes the means used by Communists to poison the minds of American youth, who in this instance, another committee member states, were toying with treason.

THE FILM has been widely criticized. Paul Jacobs has stated in *The Reporter* that "the film clips were edited deliberately to distort a number of facts." One of the H.U.A.C. investigators has been reported as having admitted that the film has inaccuracies and distortions. Other observers have wondered if the film hadn't blown the incident out of all proportions, or were disturbed, as the Jesuit weekly *America* was, at the Committee's "willingness to lump all its numerous critics together as Communists or Communist dupers." The *Christian Century* spoke of it as "a giant deception of the American public." The *Oklahoma Courier,* official weekly of the Oklahoma City-Tulsa diocese, accused it of "distortions so blatant and so extreme as to produce the net effect of a lie." The students themselves deny that they were Communist-led and have been busy defending themselves from the accusations and insinuations of the film. Numerous publications both secular and religious, including the *National Review* and the *Saturday Evening Post,* have nevertheless recommended it, as have the many business organizations that have made it available for showings.

"Communism on the Map" appears to be less generally known, although it has been shown rather widely about the country since its release in July of 1960. It is a film-strip (a series of colored slides synchronized with a tape-recorded commentary) the subject of which is the extent to which Russian Communism has all but isolated the United States from the rest of the world. It was produced by the National Education Program,

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an institution founded and headed by Dr. George S. Benson, and is reported to have been given an award by the Freedoms Foundation. The N.E.P. is located in Searcy, Arkansas, on the campus of Harding College, a small denominational school (Church of Christ) of which Dr. Benson is the president.

It would be safe to say that before the recent controversy few people here, even in educational circles, had ever heard of Harding College, Dr. Benson or his N.E.P. although as far back as 1952 H. V. Knight suggested in the *Nation* that the latter two might be having "a greater influence on the economic thinking of the American people than most of our great universities." According to Mr. Knight, the N.E.P. was at that time spending over a million a year to educate the country along lines laid down by Adam Smith. Its activities included a syndicated newspaper column, the Harding Monthly Letter, the radio program "Land of the Free," an annual Freedom Forum conducted on the Harding campus and the production of technicolor animated cartoons which interpreted current problems with a strong conservative bias. These propaganda films were turned over to Metro-Goldywn-Mayer for distribution to movie theaters as entertainment or were sold outright to interested individuals and concerns.

This film-strip was shown widely and more or less uneventfully in the Seattle area before it turned up on the University of Washington campus and the inevitable happened. A history professor denounced it for its inaccuracies and insinuations; its defenders responded with passionate assertions of its accuracy and crucial importance; ninety-two faculty members published a statement condemning the film, and their statement was followed by the predictable insinuations and accusations of Communist infiltration in the universities; the student daily newspaper had a wonderful subject which it handled in a sprightly manner; students who jeered at the film were referred to by a local newsman as "pseudo-intellectuals"; a lawyer, addressing a suburban audience, described the film as coming out of the first chapter of the Blue Book of the John Birch Society; forty artists refused to exhibit their work at a sorority's annual Collector's Tea under the impression that the sorority's magazine had taken a stand against the professor critics of the film; there were outraged letters to editors and a report of a threatening phone call; Dr. Benson himself arrived on the scene and, speaking under the auspices of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, personally vouched for the accuracy of the film; a Tacoma Democrat introduced a motion that would have put the state legislature's blessing on the showing of the film in public schools; suddenly everybody wanted to see the film, including many who, having seen it in an earlier and calmer context, now wanted to see it again to discover what they had missed. In the meantime it moved across state to Spokane, there to join forces with "Operation Abolition" to stir up similar turmoil. In short, a first-class, educational and at times rather frightening democratic rumble.

NOW BOTH of these films are highly emotional interpretations from very limited points of view, and the intellectuals and liberals (college professors, clergymen and lawyers for the most part) who attacked them took their stand on reason, if rather emotionally in some instances. This was quite proper. St. Paul's advice has yet to be improved on: he who would redeem the times must first discern them. To discern the times one must define, distinguish, qualify and then, because he is a part of a time process, he must refine. In a democracy, where communication is crucial, this is not only important but at times quite dangerous work, for which the Freedoms Foundation is not likely to hand out any awards. Indeed, the awards in our society are most likely to go to those for whom definition, distinction and qualification are signs of the enemy.

In any event, proceeding along standard lines, the opponents of the film maintained: that it had serious factual inaccuracies; that it dangerously over-simplified its subject; that it presented the Communists as supermen whose plans never miscarried and whose abilities to dupe and infiltrate are almost irresistible; that by writing off all forms of social democracy and neutralism as next door to Communism it cast suspicion on many of our allies and needlessly multiplied our enemies; that it tended to demoralize the American people by its insinuations about some of our institutions, our leaders and their national and international programs.

The champions of the film-strip (this is also true of the champions of "Operation Abolition") have of course been unimpressed by accusations of factual inaccuracy. Either they have flatly denied that there are any factual errors or have held that the few errors in factual detail are immaterial. The shock value, the message, they say, is far too important in this time of clear emergency for such quibbling. For most of them the disjunction of the film is obvious: one either accepts its interpretation or places himself, intentionally or unintentionally, on the side of the enemy.

For the intellectual, such a naive, and even immoral, lack of respect for fact and the rules of evidence is frustrating and sometimes terrifying. But it is also instructive, for it reveals what the intellectual too often fails to take into account: the extent to which in our times facts have become confused with the interpretation and dramatization of facts. Most of those who believe in these films honestly believe they are factually accurate because they are dramatically effective.

This brings us to another consideration which the embattled intellectuals and liberals fail to take sufficiently into account: the hyperbolic temper of mind that has

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been encouraged by technological progress, especially in communication, since World War II. Jet air travel, television, radar, short wave and telephotography have forced upon us a time and space scale that puts an element of the fantastic in the most commonplace events. All that is marvelous, improbable, menacing, grotesque, unpredictable and inscrutable is flashed upon the wide screen of the mind as soon as it happens.

In such a climate, the average man, struggling to fit all this and more into a meaningful pattern, can easily feel mislocated and out of scale—as if he had strayed by accident into a world built for Greek shipping tycoons and wheeler-dealer Texas millionaires. A melodramatic habit of mind is to a certain extent induced in everyone. Events tend to become important and interpretations valid in proportion as they have operatic dimensions; common-sense explanations are suspect for lack of drama; and, as I have said, dramatic staging becomes a form of proof.

This melodramatic temper of mind affects intellectuals and liberals as well as the general public. McCarthy has left many of them in the position of the batter who has been beaned too often: now he suspects all wild pitches as deliberate attempts on his life. Thus we hear a great deal about witch hunts, lunatic fringes and fascist movements. The more apprehensive speak as though they believe that the H.U.A.C., the Chamber of Commerce's Aircade, the attacks on SANE, the John Birch Society, Dr. Benson's N.E.P. and the entire right wing of the Republican party are the surface manifestations of a giant and sinister underground, directed perhaps by a super-Führer with totalitarian aspirations. It is particularly unfortunate when this conspiracy complex affects the intellectual Left, since the burden of control, which is the burden of reason, is on it.

THERE REMAINS, of course, the very real fear of Communism, the professed issue in this wrangle, and here there is an element of grim comedy. Left and Right, liberal and conservative, intellectual and general public have rarely been in such hearty agreement on the menace of Communism, yet they fail to get through to each other. This breakdown in communication cannot be explained entirely in terms of a corrupted sense of fact and a melodramatic temper of mind. Behind the fear of Communism there are other fears, some of them only remotely relevant to it.

There is, for instance, the suspicion of intellect, which we know historically in the soap opera conflict of wit and virtue. In this melodrama the good guys have the virtue and the bad guys have the wit, and in the end wit is no match for virtue. On the international level this means that the virtuous natural American opposes the intellectually sophisticated and corrupted foreigner. It is obvious of course that the building of America required wit no less than virtue, but it is not hard to understand why a pioneering civilization almost inevitably, and for purposes of morale, makes a myth out of its virtue—particularly when its very beginnings appear as an enterprise of virtue. Nevertheless, the danger of the myth of virtue lies in the encouragement it gives to the disjunction of wit and virtue, and in the fact that virtue divorced from wit builds nothing, may in fact very easily become a destructive force.

Virtue in this context does not, of course, refer to a state of spiritual well-being but to the awareness, often quite intoxicating, of being virtuous, of being part of a noble or holy cause. The causes that arouse such a sense of virtuousness, however, are not necessarily noble or holy—as can be seen, for instance, in racism and zenophobia—but they are easily assimilated to what is noble or holy. Thus segregationism with an assist from anti-Communism becomes super-patriotism in a combination that often seems absolutely impervious to reason.

Now this myth of virtue, which is an aspect of American innocence, is everywhere a factor in American life, and this is apart from the fact that the party of virtue not only has to live by its wits like everyone else but even, on occasion, exploits its virtue with a good deal of wit. It is clearly enough a factor in the present controversy. Both of these films make a great deal of the diabolic cleverness and subtlety of the Communists and of the ease with which they have been able to dupe and make tools of the very people we look to for leadership and protection. The Communists belong preeminently with the party of wit; they are the international city-slickers.

This is not to argue that the Right has always been the party of virtue while the Left has been the party of wit. The distinction cuts across the political divisions; the Left has had and no doubt will continue to have its excesses of virtue, and its more excitable spokesmen right now smack more of virtue than of wit. But the fact remains that now as in the days of McCarthy the intellectual Left is the party of wit. Hence the plight of the intellectual, already suspect for having cut himself off from grass-roots orthodoxies. If he tries to make the point that it is possible to be against these films and yet be a good American he is simply displaying that intellectual legerdemain that proves to the party of virtue which side he is really on. The very tools he must use to redeem the times—definition, distinction and qualification—are the tests that are used against him.

Reacting against the articulated and sophisticated definitions of the party of wit, the party of virtue defines its orthodoxies ever more narrowly. The psychology of the excessively limited definition is negative and protective; the aim is to define the enemy in ever

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clearer terms, but the effect is to increase the definer's fear, since the more he restricts his definition of orthodoxy the larger and more menacing becomes the camp of the unorthodox. This may be a reason why the more extreme members of the party of virtue—the John Birch Society, for instance—make so much of fear, as though it were the supreme creative force.

THUS WE see in a disturbing way the creative powers of definition. The H.U.A.C., for example, by its very nature defines freedom with the emphasis on security and inevitably creates the American Civil Liberties Union with its emphasis on the rights of individuals. This is not the perversity of the Left but the dialectic of the democratic process itself. We see also, in the John Birch Society, the irony of a complete equation of liberty with security: the whole governing process becomes the enemy and the equator finds himself beside antinomians and anarchists of the most negative and destructive sort—yet with values that can only terminate in a tightly regulated society. Indeed, one of the chief values of this controversy is the extent to which it throws light on the predicament of the extreme Right: its fundamental suspicion of government is that of Thoreau and Emerson, yet it is unable to generate in itself that transcendental optimism about nature without which the suspicion is pointless. It must simply do the best it can with what Reinhold Niebuhr, speaking of the Protestant heritage of American democracy, has called "an irrelevant individualism, in which Calvinist piety and Social Darwinism are curiously compounded."

One also becomes aware of another fear operating below the surface, and that is the fear of the consequences of technological change. Business and industry are particularly susceptible to this fear, which, paradoxically, they have themselves done so much to generate. For a long time the business and industrial Right was able to entertain a golden but fantastic vision of an ever-increasing technological advance in a basically unchanged political and social structure. But technological advance has now become so dramatic, has such obvious political and social repercussions and has rendered anachronistic so much of the conservative tradition that the great vision is threatening to turn into a nightmare.

With too little faith in, and too much ignorance of, the potentialities of democracy, the only alternative to holding desperately to outmoded conservative formulas seems to be Communism, which has found its own terrible solution to the problem of technological change. All liberal efforts to adjust to technological change, to humanize it, tend then to appear simply as steps to communism. This is why the Right is so susceptible to the simplistic equation of all forms of social democracy, and indeed many forms of federal social action, with Communism. Such an equation is one of the strongest selling points of "Communism on the Map."

Part of the truth about the anti-Communism of the Right, then, is that it is an unconscious diversionary tactic designed to distract itself from its own anxieties and to shift its burden of guilt to an acceptable enemy. Its fears, formerly directed against a very real foreign enemy, are in great part substantially directed against a part of the American heritage it has never been able to accept as American. This part is simply the social gospel of democracy, its vision of a brotherhood. The heated rejection of this vision helps us to see the extent to which Communism is an American heresy. It helps us to see also that if Communism did not exist some of us would have to invent it, or something very like it, to realize dramatically the full extent of our fears of our own heritage.

Indeed, what one finally realizes is that one of the prime functions of such a controversy as this is to force onto the stage the elements of that heritage. This is perhaps democracy's way of protecting itself; for democracy not only depends on education, which is communication, to succeed but it is itself an educative process. Its practice is to make use of the times that try men's souls to teach citizens the truth about itself. And what is it trying to teach us here in the state of Washington—it is an old lesson taught many times before—is that if we are ignorant of or deny a part of our heritage, that part will in a time of stress rise up to haunt us and confuse our efforts to protect ourselves from our real enemies. We face fascist and Communist threats, and they must be discerned and resisted. But in the meantime, weakening our resistance to all external threats, there is the disease in our own flesh that turns American against American.

And yet it is not impossible that the disease is the prelude to a sounder health, just as the breakdown of the individual may, if he faces up to the suppressed elements in his personality, be the occasion of a wholeness he never knew before. There is a certain respect in which Joe McCarthy was good for the country. I am not referring to the familiar argument that he at least alerted us to the dangers of Communism, but to the fact that he alerted us to the disease in our flesh that helped to make him possible.

Surely something like this was in Jefferson's mind when he wrote to Madison: "I hold it that a little rebellion now and then is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical." He was referring to Shay's Rebellion, but was he not also referring to the instructional function of crisis in a democracy? That it may not pass the crisis is of course the risk it must be willing to run. Totalitarianism, the inducement to which is the promise of government without crisis, is the alternative.

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J.F.K.: A British View

by MICHAEL P. FOGARTY

IT IS ALREADY becoming hard to cast one's mind back to the image of America on this side of the Atlantic in the last years of the Eisenhower regime. It is not surprising that that image has faded quickly, for it was without distinction, blurred at the edges and characterized by cozy comfort rather than the pursuit of excellence; an image of wealth without growth, of education without excellence, of ham-fisted brinkmanship and liberal largesse to ill-assorted potentates, of a socialized society of well-adjusted group members, cozy, other-directed, and uncreative.

This image was, it is true, a caricature, but like all good caricatures it had enough truth to sting. America in the last few years has presented to the outer world a picture neither of direction nor of dynamism, nor even of simple competence.

It would equally be a caricature to say that all this is now different. But the image of American national policy has most certainly changed.

President Kennedy's inaugural address, his messages on the State of the Union, on economic growth and the balance of payments, and on the development program for Latin America have been eagerly read in Britain and favorably commented on; we too, we feel, could use some of the Kennedy spirit. The President's handling of the Laos situation and the Macmillan talks has been widely approved. Our papers are full of accounts of new men and a new sense of purpose and efficiency in the bureaus of Washington.

We are cautious; we remember that other Presidents before Kennedy have come in with high hopes and dramatic gestures and gone out in a silence of disillusionment. But we readily admit that as of today America is led by men who appear not merely to possess world leadership but to deserve it. What intrigues us is to know whether this reflects a change in America or merely a change in the White House; it is on this, of course, that the permanence of the change actually depends.

Speaking some weeks ago during a conference of the British Institute of Management, William H. Whyte, the author of *Organization Man,* gave us what seems the most convincing explanation to date. Till a couple of years ago, Whyte said, the thesis of *Organization Man* held true in all its dispiriting gloom. Rugged individualism was out. America had gone soft on results. The social ethic of Elton Mayo had conquered. In education and in management, the rule was to look after group relations and let creativity look after itself, or rather to assume that creativity was a function of group relations so that one would follow from the other.

TO MANY OF us the most convincing and alarming proof of Whyte's thesis was the record of collaboration, death, and disease among American prisoners of war in Korea. Such diverse characters as Turkish peasants, British regular army officers, and those fine old-fashioned characters the U.S. Marines (Whyte, we understand, was a Marine) proved to have enough courage, discipline, and sense of direction to cope with a situation in which the ordinary framework of their lives was broken. Not so, however, the average American. Take him away from the group in which he lives and moves and seeks refuge from womb-starvation, and he only too literally curls up and dies.

But, said Whyte, today a new spirit is moving. It came in with the sputnik, the recession, and the softness of the dollar, all proofs that creativity is not a function of cozy groups but comes only to those who aim at it directly.

In management training and to a more limited extent in education there is a new interest in results. A new graduate entrant into American industry is more likely today than a few years ago to be expected to get right down to a concrete job and become an expert in it. He is less likely to start with a vague general program of observing how others conduct management at a level he himself is unlikely to attain for years.

Rugged individualists walk again in electronics, or generally in automation, and notably on the West Coast; men of inflated ego, conspicuous consumption, and a fine old-fashioned ruthlessness. I have just been reading an account of the impact of automation on West Coast offices, and particularly of the attitudes of the technicians who put it in, which fully bears this out. Competence or, better, excellence are becoming the order of the day.

Of this new trend John F. Kennedy is not the cause but the symbol. Here is a man who is not afraid to

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say "I", who proceeds in a definite direction and is interested in results. We are told that he is not merely competent but a master in his own profession of politics, and that in other fields he does not merely approve and conciliate but takes an interest in the details of what is planned and an active hand in policy-making. He does not reject organization; on the contrary, he uses it with great skill. But he knows how to dominate it and direct it to produce those results that he personally thinks right. He can make organization an extension of his own personality instead of a morass in which personality sinks.

In short, John F. Kennedy looks like an anti-Organization Man. If what our press tells us of Mrs. Kennedy's attitude to her husband's office parties is correct, it would appear that he has demonstrated this still further by marrying the anti-Company Wife.

THIS INTERPRETATION of what is happening to America may be a passing wave of optimism. But I am convinced by it for three main reasons.

First, there are the challenges now facing America. Whether in foreign affairs or in competition to maintain a lead in the pace and quality of internal economic and social development, these challenges are so real and pressing that if there is life left in the American people at all an effort to face them more seriously was bound to come.

Organization man, as Machiavelli observed, has no survival value. A Prince should keep an Organization Man as his secretary, for the secretary is a staff man, an extension of his chief's personality, and if he has no personality of his own, so much the better. But the Prince himself, though he must, certainly, know how to play the organization game—that is a chief part of the skill of being a prince—must also know how to stamp his own pattern on the organization and turn it to his own purposes; otherwise he will very quickly cease to be a prince at all.

Secondly, it has been apparent for some time that America has reached, not the limit of its economic and cultural or political growth, but a point where a particular phase of growth is ending and another is due to take its place. America has followed a different road to the managed society from that taken by Britain. In Britain the pressure has come primarily from labor and only secondarily from management, and has been translated above all into such policies as nationalization and the welfare state. In America the pressure has come more from the side of management and education, and has been translated into what I would call the socialized society; a preoccupation with social relations and the problems of group living, whether in the shape of managerial group dynamics or of that high socialization of American children that strikes the European visitor so sharply.

Furthermore, the American development has followed perhaps half a generation to a generation behind that of Britain. America today, I would say, is reaching the same point in its version of the managed society as Great Britain reached in its own pattern during the late forties.

What is this point? It is the point at which argument about the principle of a managed society moves off the center of the stage, though it goes on in the wings for some time yet, and argument about the best way to run a managed society takes its place.

It is inevitable, when principles are being argued over, that they should be driven to excess. This has been true alike of the nationalization movement in Britain and of the group-worship of American schools and management. A shake-down phase is therefore needed, after the principle of the managed society is settled, to get rid of the excesses and rough edges and, without rejecting the principle itself, to make it operate efficiently in terms of both productivity and humanity.

That is the meaning of the Liberal and Conservative criticism being directed in Britain, not against State responsibility it itself, but against the way that State responsibility has been interpreted by the socialists of the old guard. In the same way my guess would be that the anti-Organization Man trend in America represents, not a rejection of organization, but a drive by a generation which takes organization for granted to make it work so as to produce not only social smoothness but results.

Thirdly, it has also been apparent that many forces in America have been pushing against the ceiling of the last phase of development and waiting for the opportunity to break through. Visiting Catholic action movements in America five years ago, I was struck again and again by two things.

On the one hand, I was told repeatedly that American Catholicism had reached a ceiling characterized by high religious practice and sound morals, but also by inability to break through to higher levels of spiritual achievement or to identify or become involved in current secular, especially social, problems. On the other hand, it was also apparent again and again that Catholic movements coming up or reconstructing themselves at that time, for the family, in industry, or in higher education, had a clear grasp of what needed to be done. The growing points were there, but a new climate was needed to let them break through the crust of existing assumptions.

I would guess that this is symbolic not only of Catholic life but of American life in general. As one who believes that the free world will be led by America or by no one, politically, economically, and even in the fields of religion and culture, I devoutly hope that I am right.

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German Catholic Voice

by GEORGE N. SHUSTER

NEWS OF the death of Franz Josef Schoeningh on December 8 last was perhaps noted with deep regret in the United States only by those who after World War II were engaged in helping to build a free German press on the ruins of Nazism. This extraordinarily engaging and richly endowed man was then entrusted with a large measure of responsibility for a highly influential Munich daily, the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung,* which, alas, has been until this very moment something of a problem child. Certainly it did not permit him to end his career on a bed of flowers. Meanwhile he was also the editor of Catholic Germany's most renowned and effective literary review, *Hochland,* now in its fifty-second successful year.

Since this magazine played a not insignificant part in the orientation of The Commonweal during its formative years, I am glad to be able to say something about it here and to seek to characterize its most recent editor. The small group rallied thirty-seven years ago by Michael Williams thought in various ways about how to take advantage of what we believed to be the rich experience of Europe. Mr. Williams himself was an ardent admirer of the noted Catholic writers and journalists of Great Britain, doughtily led at the time by Chesterton and Belloc. Thomas Walsh was filled with lore about Spain, its mystics and its poets. For my part, I had come from Notre Dame in 1924 with my intellectual pockets stuffed with ideas suggested by French and German periodicals, which it had been my professional responsibility to read.

Of these periodicals two are of special moment here because they were edited, as The Commonweal was of course to be, by laymen. The French *Correspondant,* founded to continue the tradition of Montalembert, was no doubt the most engrossing periodical ever issued by men who tried always to see the Church in the broad perspective of European history and culture. But it was above all the German *Hochland* which absorbed and beguiled me. It was something very strikingly individual among Catholic journals. Each number brought a sheaf of essays always invigoratingly new, remarkably substantial, rich in personal impact. Quite extraordinary was the fact that although an issue did not stress a theme, it was somehow unified in spite of diversity. That is why even today a file of *Hochland* remains a very pertinent and readable guide to what was the state of Catholic opinion at the time, at the deepest layer of philosophic and literary experience.

I had of course realized that *Hochland* was notably free of a variety of taboos prevalent in a period when few bridges led out of the Catholic redoubt and when a naughty word in a novel signaled the presence of obscene literature. But nothing had prepared me for an experience in Munich during 1930. I had been invited to speak at the University's International Student House; and to the great surprise of everyone Cardinal Faulhaber walked in. The reason doubtless was that The Commonweal had written appreciatively of some things the Cardinal had said or written, and that he wished to return the compliment. I therefore thought it appropriate, though the audience was academic, to say how great was my indebtedness to Munich's *Hochland.*

The Cardinal never referred, during any of the numerous conversations I had with him in subsequent years, to the accolade thus conferred on the magazine. But the news spread through intellectual Munich as if the town-crier had repeated it all night long; and to my astonishment I learned that "officially" *Hochland* was considered a blend of conundrum and nuisance. This affair resulted in beguiling conversations with the magazine's distinguished founder and editor, Professor Karl Muth (the title was honorary, having been conferred by the erstwhile King of Bavaria, but it suited the man admirably). He possessed enormous charm; and, though he himself wrote little, his gift for ferreting out and encouraging writers of promise was almost uncanny. Upon occasion the stipends he was able to pay constituted what today would be called fellowships; and an article by a young author or a novel (the magazine then published fiction in serial form) by one already better established might be a year or more in the making. The circles from which the best contributors were drawn constituted the vanguard of German Catholic thinkers and artists of the time, which was one of ferment, excitement and creative impulse. These men and women were soon to be submerged in the flood of Nazism, but to their everlasting credit it may be said that although some died in it none drowned.

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TODAY ONE can see more clearly what the German argument was basically about. German Catholicism had come out of the harrowing experience of Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* and the subsequent triumph of Liberalism, European style, profoundly inimical to the time-spirit and its consequences. In a sense it was entrenched behind the Center Party and the educational agencies that Party had founded. To some these seemed too non-ecclesiastical, too conciliatory; and to others they appeared too closely identified with the clerical mission. *Hochland,* associated with the second camp, no doubt was upon occasion too audacious and impatient. Some of the German bishops, for their part, believed that Catholic Action as it developed in Italy under Fascism was desirable for Germany also; and a very few seem even to have thought that a strong authoritarian government, which would put Communists and others in their places, was to be hoped for. The fact that when Hitler came to power he stood ready to sign a Concordat which the Weimar Government had shied away from had an overpowering effect, however short-lived. We now know that the Center Party agreed to the Enabling Act of 1933 because of a decision to drop Dr. Heinrich Bruening in order to secure "collaboration." This as a matter of fact some of the bishops welcomed in language so profuse that it can be recalled today only with embarrassment.

Hochland's place in the intellectual history of the time may be defined in terms of an effort to share in a necessarily pluralistic society and to influence that society in the largest measure possible by demonstrating without fanfare that Catholic scholars and writers were peers of the realm. The demonstration was as a matter of fact remarkably successful. There was no better periodical in Germany than this. The Nazis did not immediately put *Hochland* out of business because the fairly large number of foreign subscribers paid in the currency of their countries, and it retreated to its ghetto with ability and some malice. Articles about Cromwell and Robespierre were masked commentaries on the German scene. Muth ranged far and wide for contributors. He wrote me from Switzerland asking that I seek to arrange with Alfred Knopf for the serial publication of Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop.* This the generous publisher agreed to do, though the hope for royalties was exceedingly dim. In the end Goebbels' caveat brought the magazine to a halt for five years.

During this period of clandestine warfare Schoeningh emerged as Muth's deputy editor and most trusted collaborator. He was courageous and admirably equipped for the protesting in disguise which constituted *Hochland's* mission during the six years after 1935. Coming from a well-to-do Westphalian family, he had entered as a university student the constantly challenging intellectual life of Catholic Munich. Although the Bavarians were conservative in the sense that they clung to folkways and reverenced a deposed Wittelsbach monarch who conveniently entertained no desire to return to the throne, they were much more mobile and irreverent than the staid but professedly more democratic Westphalians. The now legendary Father Johannes Maister, then student chaplain of the University, was the most ardent of conceivable lovers of music and the theater; and there were other clergymen who revelled in Simplicissimus-like conversation quite their own. The Munich Jesuits were masters of immense learning and good prose style alike; and the Abbot of the Benedictines was both an excellent theologian and a fastidious critic of the arts. Yet in so far as *Hochland* was concerned, the summit was no doubt the circle of Theodor Haecker, the philosopher in whom Catholic Existentialism was forged on the anvil of Kierkegaard.

Schoeningh took his degree in economics, though this was already then for him a door through which one could walk out in the vast expanse of history. But for all his learning he was never a scholar but rather an essayist, whose ability to compress a great deal of thought and experience in lapidary prose would later on be greatly admired. During the twenties there was a quite Faustian episode. He was drawn to the Berlin of Reinhardt and Brecht, in the hope of triumphing as an actor. In this he failed, but he had the benefit of life in Berlin, then by all odds the most fascinating, bewildering and many-sided of European cities. There he came squarely up against the torturing problems of modern urbanism, but his Catholic outlook also deepened and broadened. Coming back to Munich he was ready for the hard and venturesome life that henceforth would be his.

WHEN 1946 dawned, Muth was dead, after having escaped the Nazi executioners by a kind of miracle, and it was under Schoeningh's tutelage that *Hochland* was reborn. He was a quiet, courteous man who combined rare tact with a knowledge of almost everything there was to be known about human beings. His wife was gone; he brooded over the problems of educating an only daughter; and he catered to his basic loneliness by retreating whenever he could to Bavarian mountains now become beloved. The rococo art of the southern towns was during his later years a constant source of joy. Though he was physically never robust, he shouldered burdens any one of which would have sufficed for a lifetime. He was the publisher of a daily newspaper, was involved in radio broadcasting, and had a hand in the efforts of the Koesel Verlag, one of Germany's best-known Catholic publishing houses.

Still he had time and energy enough for *Hochland,* which under his direction met the new time head-on.

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It was a matter of conscience to sift the dread legacy of Nazism, to face the problems of democratic government in a society of necessity committed to pluralism, and to learn how to swim in the current of ideas that coursed with relentless speed under a surface colored by the economics of the German recovery. Marx was dead, but who was to take his place? In another way Hitler, too, was no more, but how much of the substance of the Catholic West had eroded? *Hochland* and Schoeningh confronted such questions with unflagging candor. Nor would they cease trying to keep the German horizon as wide as the West. The last issue of the magazine prepared by him has articles about Newman, Belloc and the Italian Institute which continues the tradition of Croce. Sometimes I thought that Schoeningh had grown too critical of his country as a whole, and too enamored of that part of it which is Bavaria.

But then I thought of an experience he shared with me. We were discussing the anxiety of many Germans who had once fallen in line with Nazism to buy up and destroy pictures taken of themselves in company with some Party chieftain or other. Schoeningh opened a desk drawer and took out a glossy print which showed him standing beside Hitler. What had happened was that one afternoon, after many months of fencing desperately with Goebbels for the life and integrity of *Hochland,* Schoeningh had gone to see a small art exhibit. Suddenly there was a commotion about him, and flash light bulbs exploded on every side. He looked round and saw Hitler beside him. It seemed to give him great pleasure to think that the tyrant had unwittingly had his picture taken next to one who understood the evil that was in him and was desperately trying to fend it off. And so, perhaps, Schoeningh lived by the thought that the reality of evil in man might in the twinkling of an eye be close to one, and that therefore it was necessary always to be on guard, never to consider the struggle won, and never wittingly to assent if at some unwary moment the Church were in the company of Evil unaware.

TWO APPEALS

Mother M. Laurentine, Ursuline Convent, Lohardaga P.O., (Dist: Ranchi) Bihar, India, is in charge of a new mission station. The community needs funds to build a small school and hospital for the poor in that region.

Sister Mary Evangelist, Holy Rosary Convent, Honavar, N. Konara, India, has started a small Carmelite school whose rent is paid by local poor families until June. Then funds will be needed for that purpose as well as to set up work rooms for their pupils' "less fortunate older sisters, where they could learn some useful trade."

THE SCREEN

A TIME REMEMBERED

CONSIDERING the wide attention given to the Eichmann trial and the phenomenal popularity of Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich,* it was inevitable that the movies would have something to add. And they do—with "Mein Kampf," a documentary film that outlines the rise and fall of Hitler as well as his Reich. Produced in Sweden by Tore Sjoberg, "Mein Kampf" was written and edited by Erwin Leiser who culled his revealing shots from various newsreels, documentaries, photographs and even Nazi footage. The film starts in 1945 with the bombing of Berlin, then flashes back to 1914 with some scratchy though fascinating scenes of World War I and its aftermath, and then traces events in Germany through the twenties and thirties. Although the film covers this history too rapidly, it conveys particularly well the political scene and the confusion in Germany that led to Hitler and his pack assuming absolute power.

As disturbing as some of these familiar sequences are—the curtailing of liberties, the winning of youth, the rise of concentration camps, the terror tactics, Chamberlain's efforts at "peace in our time," the so-called bloodless victories in Austria and Czechoslovakia —they are nothing compared to the horrors displayed after the German armies' march into Poland. Shots taken by S.S. photographers of the Warsaw ghetto where Himmler's systematic reign of terror crowded the Jews, record a new high in man's inhumanity to man. These scenes show oppressed Jews cast aside like bundles of rags in their cramped quarters or who lie dying or already dead in the streets. The rest of "Mein Kampf," with its vivid war scenes, German defeats in Russia and Africa, the trials of German leaders who attempted to revolt against Hitler, and Germans in their final retreat are almost anticlimactic.

The script, well narrated in English by Claude Stephenson, uses the original German voices, with subtitles, wherever possible. Erwin Leiser editorializes very little but he does comment on the Spanish Civil War as a prelude to World War II and he does ask why the Russians didn't come to the aid of the Poles who were still revolting and valiantly fighting in 1944.

The pictures tell the grim story. Perhaps the most surprising thing about "Mein Kampf" is its popularity in Germany where many of its young people are learning the horrible truth for the first time. I'm not sure who makes up the audiences in other countries, but the carefully compiled documentary certainly deserves attention—if only to remind viewers again that no man is an island.

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A more recent reminder of more current events in Germany has been made by the Lutheran Film Associates. Produced by Lothar Wolff for the Lutherans and Louis de Rochemont Associates, "Question 7" is a vivid propaganda film depicting the trials of the church in East Germany. Its story concentrates on the methods used by the Communists to win the children from the church groups and into the Party. Based on actual incidents and handsomely photographed in black-and-white in various German cities and in the town of Moelln near the East-West border, it shows the arrival of a new pastor (effectively underplayed by Michael Gwynn) who soon learns what his predecessor went through. Then he too must try to protect his flock, particularly the young people, from the Communist line which teaches that the church is always in league with reaction and that Luther himself was among the betrayers of the people.

One of the most effective weapons used by this police state is a questionnaire handed out to all the students in East Germany, a document that requires the politically correct answers if the students hope to get ahead. What happens when the pastor's fifteen-year-old son (Christian de Bresson) comes into conflict with himself over the questionnaire and his worthy desire for a scholarship in the music conservatory is fascinating. Although "Question 7" has a factual basis and deserves commendation for its intentions, its propaganda is rather obvious.

ALSO PROVING a point but using a more dramatic technique to put it over is "They Were Ten," an Israeli film about nine men and one woman, refugees driven out of Russia, who settle in Palestine at the end of the nineteenth century. They have to contend not only with the unreasonable Turkish police and the suspicious Arabs, whose village is near the barn in which they live, but also with the stubborn land and difficult climate of their new country. Produced and directed by Baruch Dienar, "They Were Ten" has a vital and realistic quality in spite of its occasional naiveté. Perhaps it is the film's very simplicity that makes it so absorbing and believable as it unfolds its story of this first year. Some of the settlers get discouraged and leave; some survive and manage to maintain an impressive dignity in spite of seemingly overwhelming odds.

Outstanding in the cast are Oded Teomi and Ninette as the husband and wife in the group, but the entire cast succeed in lending a tone of reality to this film that is like a pictorial song of the land. "They Were Ten," which has English subtitles to translate the soundtrack's Hebrew, probably won't make history as a great movie, but it will interest a great many people for its authentic locale and its stirring story of brave refugees.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

Palo Alto, Cal.

TO THE EDITORS: In the current discussions of that persistent problem: government aid to private educational institutions, I have looked in vain for consideration of the following points:

1. You quote Cardinal Spellman: "It is unthinkable that any American child be denied the Federal funds allotted to other children which are necessary for his mental development because his parents chose for him a God-centered school." Why is it unthinkable? Hasn't this situation existed for a long time in most of the individual states? I am not aware of this situation being widely decried in Catholic circles. Is there a moral distinction between Federal and State funds? My tentative conclusion is that there is not, and that the present stand is based on political realities as much as on grounds of justice.

2. In a recent issue, *Time* Magazine quotes Cardinal Cushing as stating, in 1955, "We are not looking for any federal or Government aid to build our schools." Whatever problem of context may be present here, my own impression of the thinking of the Church authorities coincides with the gist of this statement. I can hardly blame non-Catholics who fear that we are following a foot-in-the-door policy on legislation, with a long string of demands yet to be revealed. Frankly, that's the way it looks to me. Do we not owe a candid answer to those who might ask, "Just where is your final demand in this matter? Where do *you* think the U. S. Constitution or justice draws the line?" As a Catholic, of course, I am not inclined to view these progressively increasing demands as a part of a sinister plot. I suspect they simply reflect a failure on the part of Catholic authorities to face the education problem squarely and to determine what would be required to maintain the parochial school system for the next generation or so.

3. To what limit can we push the argument that the support is to the individual child, not to the institution? Personally, I have always felt on firm ground in applying it to government-subsidized food, bus rides, medical services, scholarships, etc. Doesn't the argument lose some of its incisiveness when we start talking about government-subsidized buildings and contributions to teachers' salaries?

4. Doesn't the fact that parochial buildings are not public buildings, that is, not open to all children on an equitable basis, weigh heavily against government support? In my personal experience here in California, parochial schools have not been able to accept all of the Catholic children applying. Admission decisions rest solely with the pastor, who usually does not deign

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to reveal his selection system. As a citizen I rebel against the government contributing to the arbitrary authority of anyone not an elected official or an appointee of one.

5. My understanding is that title to Church properties is vested in the bishop or archbishop of a diocese. I wonder how in justice governmental aid to education can take a form that will increase the properties of an establishment which is constitutionally exempt from legislative action.

6. It may be argued that government aid is already flowing to private universities. As a teacher in a private, non-sectarian university, I am very conscious of this aid and of the great reliance on it. The aid takes several forms: grants for specific research projects, grants for improvement of teaching and research facilities, long-term, low-interest loans for construction of student housing. I am sure most, if not all, such forms are extended to private universities having religious affiliations. Is there a basic difference between such aid to universities and the aid to private elementary and secondary schools? I suspect there is, but am not prepared to argue the case. Arguments would probably center around the fact that the religious affiliated universities are more open to scholars of all convictions than are parochial elementary and secondary schools, and that in universities, religious teaching is more easily separated from the secular.

7. How do we reconcile arguments supporting the Catholic authorities' stand in the current aid-to-education debate and that in the birth control information debate of a year or so ago? My understanding of the latter position is that it is wrong to use public funds to disseminate information morally repugnant to some citizens. In our plural society aren't we Catholics obliged to acknowledge that our school buildings, with their statues and votive lights, are morally objectionable to a significant fraction of our fellow citizens? Can we then ask that their tax money be used to aid in the construction of such buildings?

8. The current N.C.W.C. position is that aid might take the form of building loans. I gather that it is not proposed that aid would extend to teachers' salaries. It has seemed to me in recent years that a teacher shortage was more serious in parochial schools than a building shortage. The number of lay teachers has been increasing rapidly. It is generally agreed that they are grossly underpaid. Is anyone seriously proposing that the Church could effectively operate a school system made larger by virtue of government loans for buildings without requiring additional support for lay teachers' salaries also?

I agree with The Commonweal that, ". . . we have heard enough of the simple solution . . ." from the opponents of aid. I believe, however, that the fault has not been one-sided. What concession of autonomy, if any, are Church authorities prepared to make in return for government aid? If aid should be granted, then what would they propose as an equitable formula for distribution of available funds between "public" and "private" schools? Should support be requested from the individual states as well as from the Federal government? If answers to these and similar questions have been formulated, then I believe the Church authorities would do better to share their views with the laity, rather than waiting for some politically propitious moment. THOMAS J. CONNOLLY.

"SCHISM IN EDUCATION"

New York, N. Y.

TO THE EDITORS: Christopher Dawson states in his "Schism in Education" [April 7] that while the Renaissance is usually blamed for the schism between lay and clerical education and thus culture, the "basic cause seems rather to be found in the medieval tendency to make study a monopoly of the clergy, so that the layman had no place in the medieval university and in the organization of higher scholarship. Hence the rise of a new lay educated class brought with it an independent ideal of lay culture." . . . "while the clergy studied the Bible and the Fathers, the laity studied the classics" . . .

Yet, was the schism of lay and clerical learning complete by the end of the Middle Ages, or was it but a trend which the Christian humanists of the Renaissance, such as the layman Thomas More, were trying to reverse? Was it not precisely a union of a more accurate Bible and the Fathers on the one hand and a deeper understanding of a growing body of classics on the other that these humanists were attempting, much as Aquinas had in an earlier but more limited way? Was a basic cause of this schism, as of so much other schism, the Reformation with its priesthood of *all* Christians which produced the Counter-Reformation with its insistence on the utter domination of the clergy in the religious sphere? Was it the Counter-Reformation that smashed until recent times the incipient reconciliation of lay and clerical, or religious and secular wisdom which many humanists were attempting, albeit outside the medieval university and the old scholasticism?

And what of the Reformation and its exaltation of the laity in the religious sphere, its insistence on a laity educated in the Bible or evangelical theology and pity? At least for a time, did it achieve a synthesis of lay and clerical culture which, ironically, it drove the Counter-Reformation to crush? There are more questions to suggest but I simply wanted to point out that while Professor Dawson has called attention to a neglected major historical cause, he is simplifying history in saying it was the monopoly of the medieval univer-

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sities by the clergy that was "the" basic cause of an independent and secular lay culture.

H. E. HAZELTON.

New York, N. Y.

TO THE EDITORS: To at least one reader, "Schism in Education" by Christopher Dawson [April 7] revealed a disquieting schism of its own in its recommendations for healing the schism within education. The problem, as he sees it, is one of finding "some higher principle of co-ordination if our society is to survive," a principle which will serve to unite the concerns of secular and religious knowledge as they are now divided in Western education. Mr. Dawson chiefly recommends the study of Christian culture as the source and paradigm of just such a principle. However, he also introduces the idea that the desired principle of unity must be "one of transcendence which is essentially theological."

That is all very well for the study of Christian culture within Christian education, where you expect some grasp of that principle, but it is plain that for secular education Christian culture cannot even *mean* the same thing, on account of the rejection of theology. Yet it is essential to Mr. Dawson's recommendation that both participants in this schism come to terms with the religious resources of the West. A reform of Christian education alone would succeed in saving *some* culture out of the eclecticism of the present hour. It would not succeed in saving culture.

Perhaps Christians cannot save Culture written large. Certain that it cannot be saved if, as Mr. Dawson notes, "humanist education is being destroyed in favor of a new scientific model." For it is notorious, C. P. Snow's observations to the contrary, that familiarity with the atomic chart is no special aid to insight into the human condition. Moreover, without some working knowledge of the classical tradition in philosophy, not to mention theology, one can hardly expect even a passing fancy for Christian culture in secular colleges. Any astute spectator can testify that philosophy as a human study is following the fate of the passenger pigeon.

Perhaps Christians must be content for the present to make themselves into a "Christian People" as Mr. Dawson uses that idea and realize a new Christian culture. However, it is important to emphasize that this shall be a new creation, for the task, as Teilhard de Chardin has defined it, is no less than that of ultimately "building the earth." It seems to me that Prof. Dawson places too much emphasis on "recovering" and "restoring" ideas of Christian culture. For even in looking back one must ask *which Christian culture* to imitate, remembering the differences which Mr. Dawson elsewhere has labored tirelessly to show.

No doubt the coming Christian culture will be in some respects the same as those of the past, but it will be all-together different. One of those differences, I should argue, does make the hope of effecting a change in the present secular culture a reasonable one. That is, that the Christian society of the future will be open to the measure of our modern pluralist society. It will engage in the centers of world social change to an extent impossible under the old nation-state system. That is why the new Christian society ought to be made up of many centers, each person being a center of Christian culture. In this way the very body of man may be rebuilt, just as cells organize themselves around centers of growth. The Christian is one of the true centripetal forces left in the world.

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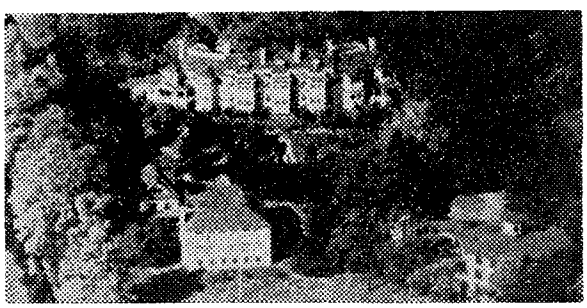

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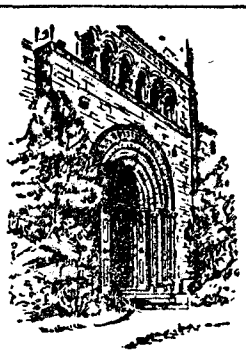

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However, it is also certain that for the present there cannot be a universal co-consciousness among Christians of the historical realization of their separate lives. They cannot have the reward of the cathedral builders, who saw the large lines of their masonry laid down. Each Christian more nearly resembles Piers Ploughman, who, be it remembered, was not without his vision. WALTER EDW. ARNOLD, JR.

"AGE OF THE LAITY?"

Chicago, Ill.

TO THE EDITORS: James O'Gara's "Age of the Laity?" [Feb. 24] ended on a note that startled me.

Are parishes the only place to look for the formation and action of laymen? Perhaps modesty forbids Mr. O'Gara's mentioning the important role The Commonweal along with other periodicals and books have had in developing the "New Layman." I, however, am not too retiring to mention the work done by lay groups—Friendship House along with many others. And what about our educational system—parochial and non-parochial—to cite but one more area. (Perhaps I underestimate the role and potential of the parish. We have so little experience of what a truly dynamic parochial life could be!)

More important: are parishes the place where the layman's contribution is primarily to be made? Surely not. The layman's contribution is chiefly, primarily, to be made in the temporal order, the "secular" order. I am reminded of a passage from a talk by Monsignor Reynold Hillenbrand at a Friendship House study weekend last August:

"Christ does not expect the layman to do a priest's work. The layman can help a priest, too, but this is not his precise job—and the more clearly we see that the better off we are. This goes back to the enormous doctrinal reality of the Mystical Body. Christ . . . allocates certain functions to certain people, other functions to other people. By and large there are two categories: that of the clergy having to do with things divine—to enable Our Lord to step into human life through the sacraments; that of the laity of lifting the *world* to Christ (the world of 1960)."

Unless our New Layman understands that and understands, too, that no matter how many study groups are formed, how much lay apostolic action is encouraged, how well interracial justice is faced up to in his parish, he still must move out on his own, constantly pioneer, endlessly renew his commitment to and working out of temporal situations, unless and until he grasps all this, the New Layman compounds his difficulties by seeking support and expecting directions that are simply not there, and should not be there. MARY DOLAN,

Friendship House.

I don't think Mary Dolan has any real quarrel with me, nor I with her. It should perhaps be noted that parish priests now have to carry out many tasks which are hardly essential to the priesthood, but with that much of a qualification I can say I do not "expect the layman to do a priest's work." On the contrary, in my remarks on the subject I specifically said: ". . . the kind of layman I have in mind has no desire to take over the priestly role."

It may be that the emphasis I placed on the parish led Miss Dolan to believe I was understating the value of the non-parish organization or that I was abandoning the temporal order. I had no such intention—not for a minute. I did think, however, that there is something badly awry when a person who feels perfectly at home when visiting, say, Friendship House feels almost like a stranger in his or her own parish. I still think so. JAMES O'GARA.

BOOKS

Nature and Grace in the Spiritual Life

A PRIEST CONFESSES. By Jose Luis Martin Descalzo. Academy Guild Press. $3.95.
TO LIVE IS CHRIST. By R. W. Gleason, S. J. Sheed & Ward. $3.

By LEONARD F. X. MAYHEW

ONE MAY discover in many recent books and articles on the spiritual life a kind of mild intellectual anti-clericalism. On the whole this is quite a healthy state of affairs. It arises from a growing realization of the proper dignity and position of the layman within the Church and of his responsibility to sanctity. The layman, called to a special non-clerical apostolate, is by the same token called to a specific non-clerical sanctity. He has no need to become an imitation priest or monk in order to fulfill these spiritual responsibilities. The life of grace operative within the Church is his by right and must be open to him. Logically, therefore, the first step will be to understand him and this status he occupies as distinct from any other.

There is one pitfall along this perfectly valid path which seems to attract less attention than certain others, less attention at least than it deserves. The impression may all too easily be created that there is a positive dichotomy between the spirituality of priest and religious and that of the laity. This cannot be so. Any individual Catholic will reach sanctity only in and through the Church. The life of the Church

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is a homogeneous reality in its principles even though it may—indeed, must—give rise to greatly variegated manifestations in its ultimate flowering.

The priesthood and the religious life under vows of perfection are certainly of the essence of the Church. The first is the epitome and the concrete embodiment of the sacramental nature and life of the Church, the organic condition of its extension of Christ in time and space. And the religious life, besides filling a need felt by countless individuals from the inception of Christianity, is a mirror of the ideals of the Gospel, a reflection of that Christian perfection which is built on faith, hope and charity.

There can be no conception of Christian perfection, sanctity and apostolate which does not take into consideration these authentic aspects of the Church's being, Sacraments and charity, as they are embodied in the priesthood and the religious life. This includes the most *au courant* notions of lay spirituality and apostolic action. The most fundamental avenue of holiness for a layman is the liturgical life centered in the Mass and the Sacraments, fully participated in and lived. Here the sense of community, of social oneness and responsibility, finds its root in the Mystical Body of Christ. The immediacy of the Christian's allegiance and contact with Christ is accomplished through and in the sacramental and liturgical life of that Body.

The objective basis of sanctity is the *truth* of Christian revelation, not merely in a moralistic sense, but in the existential and experienced fact of the supernatural which is accessible only in the Church, above all in the Eucharist. And this is the *raison d'être* of the priesthood and its proper level of operation and purpose. For this reason the priesthood and the elements of priestly sanctity are anything but alien to the spiritual perfection of any individual, including, naturally, the lay Catholic.

Father Martin Descalzo has written a highly personal testament to the priesthood in a form which is half journal, half novel. The young man he portrays during his last year as a seminarist and his first few months after ordination is a composite figure. His account, with its frequently ecstatic passages and heightened emotion often dangerously close to sentimentality will not appeal to some readers. However, the author possesses a simplicity and a lack of false sophistication which is frequently moving, often enlightening. As a result his story often has a freshness which is most appealing. He presents a very accurate portrayal in subdued tones of a constant in the priestly life. The struggle with a sense of aloneness and a desire to be accepted by others. All in all, this is one man's look at the priesthood, valuable rather more by reason of its subject than because of the universality of its insights. If the priesthood is of concern to the spiritual well-being of every member of the Church, this is one serious contribution to its better understanding.

To Live Is Christ is a rather more complex affair, more informative and interesting from a theoretical point of view. Father Gleason, a highly competent theologian and student of psychology, has in mind a specific and extremely important problem and addresses himself primarily to those actually living the religious life. This is not to say that there is not much for other readers here. The proper integration of nature and grace in the light of modern psychological knowledge is a basic concern for any religious person and indeed for the Church itself in its approach to the contemporary world.

There is no doubt that the tensions of today's world create a high incidence of personal anxieties and make for a highly self-conscious and often complicated process as the individual seeks his personal fulfillment. Grace does not cancel out these difficulties, either for a religious or for any other believing Christian for that matter. Religious formation, especially in the religious Orders and Congregations where the freely assumed additional responsibilities and goal require more drastic adjustment on the part of the individual, must take into consideration both the facts of present-day psychological problems and the light which has been cast on present day psychological problems and the light which has been cast on them by scientific research.

Father Gleason treats the several areas of discussion strictly from the point of view of the religious life but scarely a page lacks something of value immediately applicable to the spiritual situation of any Catholic. This is particularly true of his chapter on Christian maturity. The religious assumes as obligations by vow the practice of the Gospel counsels which are the key to Christian perfection for all. Charity, built upon the other theological virtues, which is the heart and essence of the religious life, as the author succeeds so well in showing, is as well the main spiritual concern of every Christian. There is an analogy, connatural and not in the least artifical, between the nature-grace relationship in the religious life and in the spiritual life of any of us.

The author pleads for a theological formation for young religious which would avoid both a legalistic moralism overly insistent on minutiae and a pious sentimentality. The Christian's ideal is always to be a person fully grown, both spiritually and affectively mature. This means a fully human person, rid of infantilism, aggressiveness, neurotic guilt and all the other apocalyptic plagues of the contemporary psyche. Intelligence, a balanced spirit of adaptation, an atmosphere which encourages personal initiative and the prudent use of the psychotherapist's help, will work toward producing a person open to a full absorption of the spiritual implications of the Incarnation. The author's very cogent presentation should be particularly challenging to any parent, teacher or director who is involved in the religious formation of the young.

To priests and religious I can recommend especially Fr. Gleason's book as exploring many important aspects of their vocations. Each book in its own way will lead to a more profound appreciation of two facets of the life of Christ in His Church.

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Post-World War III

FACIAL JUSTICE. By L. P. Hartley. Doubleday. $3.50.

By MAX COSMAN

ONE MIGHT think that the achievements of predecessors like Samuel Butler and H. G. Wells or of those closer to our time like Aldous Huxley and George Orwell would deter further envisionings of future societies. But they have not, and here is Mr. Hartley's latest work as proof.

Facial Justice, his fantasy of a state in England after the Third World War (some of the survivors have already come out of their caverns and established themselves on the waste surface) is no ab-initio piece of creation. It has the prepossession with physical being noticeable in *Erewhon* and *The Time Machine.* It even uses, if so neutral a term be permissible for unabashed appropriation, such characteristic details as the alpha-beta-gamma language of *Brave New World* and the dictatorial radio-television communication system of *1984.*

And yet, despite these recensions and others, it has a flair of its own. This is so not only because it has the professional adeptness we might expect from a writer of so preceptive a trilogy as *Eustace and Hilda,* but also because it has a point of view as personal as those of its models. For just as the earlier authors saw the world-to-be as autistic dream or fool's paradise, laboratory hall or concentration camp, Mr. Hartley sees that world as a hospital, a reformatory, at times even as a vast adult nursery.

This is no fancied impression. It is given body by such author's comments as, "it was a relaxed and invalidish Civilization," as well as by factualities that can be inferred from the text itself. To start with, the citizens of our projected state are invariably addressed as Patients and Delinquents, a set of epithets too pertinent to be accidental. Then too, they wear their sackcloth garments, take their daily drafts of bromide, perform their rituals of obeisance and attendance just as inmates of institutions commonly do, that is, unwillingly but inescapably.

Significant also, that order of the Elect, the Inspectors, resplendent in dress and unchallenged authority, never so punitive as feared nor so hated as accepted, are precisely what they are assumed to be by those in probationary places. Most telling of all, the unknown Dictator, benevolent, persuasive, concerned, adaptable, is the very image of a super director or super-duper Nanny as it turns out. Not for nothing is the adjective Darling always associated with her and her preference for curves rather than angles emphasized.

This delegation of supreme power to a woman, indeed the emphasis generally on female instead of male agonists, is Mr. Hartley's special contribution to the literature of prognostication. It is also the keenest of his sallies into satire, especially when one considers such obvious strokes as the naming of people after historic murderers and the playing of "Every Valley" as prelude to dictatorial pronouncements, or even more subtle ones like the acceptance of mediocrity in the arts in order to be more "in line with our common humanity" and the intolerableness after a while of the most benevolent guidance once it is obsessive.

Facial Justice, then, has a basic concept that is provocative. No less so, if unoriginal, is the ancillary concept that man is embroiling himself in an egalitarianism not so much a leveling up as a leveling down. Obviously Mr. Hartley is as indebted to Emerson for this idea as he self-admittedly is to Hawthorne for, among other things, the black veil which Jael wears after she has unwillingly been Beatified, to wit, been operated on so that she now has the standard face of the state.

Mr. Hartley plays the gambit of horrendous equalization to the hilt. His questionable Utopia treats Envy (Bad Ego) as the unpardonable sin. The very mention of the word is bad. Even something analogous, like lifting one's gaze from the Horizontal, is fraught with misdemeanor. And well it

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THE BATHERS

Men will find the Wapsipinicon
waiting on shinbone and knucklebone
and spirit. Men together. Alone.

Once upon an August time three men
went out to grace the water roaming.

One left groping for the skeleton
of the fish and wanted to feel it
again briefly, as the cut of salt
in a daydream of his infant tongue.

The second lolled the way streetboys loll,
took pleasure in the minnow nibbling
his sumptuous hips pleasant to turn
in the rippling, away from his soul.

The last man threw his body across
a thicket of water and he dove
as a lover as reckless in love,
with wilderness flesh to the Christfish.

Three men found the Wapsipinicon:
rembered. tingling. and a Jordan.

RAYMOND ROSELIEP.

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might, for Jael's first overt act of rebellion in a sense is to look up with admiration at the tower that remains of one-time Ely Cathedral.

This ribbing of standardization shows Mr. Hartley at his best. He is not so, unfortunately, in the theological allegory he attempts. His various touches—the Slaughter of the Innocents, inspectors named after Archangels, the mystic flowing of power into Jael when she is invested with her foe's office—tend to make one aware of something involved rather than of anything achieved.

Luckily, the failure is peripheral. At heart *Facial Justice* is a work of intellectual fancy and play, yet serious enough to know the danger of "mistaking the appearance for the reality." It is worth reading.

REVIEWERS

Father Leonard F. X. Mayhew is a parish priest now stationed in Monroe, Georgia.

Max Cosman contributes frequently to various journals concerned with literary and general cultural matters.

ART

Splendid Century

TO LEARN the lessons of the past always requires a double point of view: the point of view of the present as well as the point of view of that period in history upon which we fix. It is this duality that gives the sting of life to historical studies and which leads to that constant reassessment that is the most vital element in scholarship. Because of it perhaps nothing can or should be spoken of as definitive in this field; still there are some enterprises that seem to cry out for that adjective at certain moments.

"The Splendid Century" (French Art: 1600-1705) is an exhibition that was arranged by the joint effort of the National Gallery in Washington, the Toledo Museum of Art and the Metropolitan in N.Y. with the all-important assistance of the French Government. It has been seen at these three American museums and has offered the U.S. public a look into an exhilarating and complex time that is remarkably illuminating and for our own. Even less than a written study can an exhibition presume to be definitive—indeed, with such a large subject, and considering the impossibility of transporting the untransportable for example, complete success is not within human reach—but this presentation of the art of seventeenth century France comes close to being one of rare enterprises deserving of that accolade.

In the first place, the exhibit reveals, in an inspired choice of concrete images, the informing and pervasive spirit that overrides the whole rich panoply of the works of art of the century called "le Grand." It is a spirit of order, an order that has a grand architectural quality. This grand sense of order may be found, whether in Patel's *View of Versailles* or in a still life such as Dupuis' *Basket of Plums*: the former displays the plan of the chateau and gardens—grand even before Mansard's additions—as if from the air; the later treats its homely subjects as grandly from the ground, its realism is elegant, it is a heroic basket of plums, architecturally composed.

The spirit of a grand sort of order found its most explicit expression in city planning—how desirable those stately parks and avenues look to a stifled twentieth-century creature!—but it is found as well in the genre painting that celebrated the rise of the new bourgeoisie and even in those elaborate fashionable portraits where the French talent for psychological insight is subordinated to the whole public personality of the sitter, his architectural appearance. Even when the baroque billows up, it is contained; the cupid by an unknown sculptor (from the gardens at Versailles, c.1705) is a baroque cherubic form whose tossed curls are restrained by a fillet and who is fixed in a heroic stance. The three great artists of the period, Poussin, Claude Lorrain and Georges de la Tour, profoundly different in style and inspiration as they are, are all marked by this spirit of architectural and heroic order.

Poussin's genius, and its relevance

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to the prevailing spirit of the seventeenth century in France, are perhaps too generally accepted to be worth substantiating further. *Landscape With Diogenes,* mentioned in the meticulously prepared catalogue as "one of the noblest of Poussin's heroic landscapes," was a jewel of the exhibit, where this French master was not too well served. Lorrain was represented by two of his best paintings, *A Harbor At Sunset* and *A Seaport,* in which a magical suffusion of light bathes the elegant disposition of landscape, buildings, ships and figures in the diaphanous colors of a high atmosphere. Lorrain's affinity to Turner and the Impressionists—with all their descendants, including some of our own action painters—makes him the dearer and clearer, but it is the elegant order of his compositions that expresses his times.

It is in Georges de la Tour, however, that the modern American is struck most powerfully by the spirit of "The Splendid Century" in France. Maybe it is not pure coincidence that the works of this artist have so recently been recovered from the relative oblivion that masked them for almost three centuries; our eyes are simply ready to see his genius in a new way after the experiments of the Fauves and the Cubists, and the work of Picasso and Matisse.

In a way de la Tour's work was a synthesis of the dual strains of realistic genre and heroic grandeur in the art of his day: he treats a genre subject (*The Woman With A Flea*) as if it were epical, and a grand theme (*St. Joseph and the Angel*) as if it were a genre scene. It is not that he ever reduces a high plane, but that he always ennobles the reality of everyday to express the most important subject. A candle held up in the dark—a "lux in tenebris"—was a sort of trademark of his best period; it served as the constructing element in his paintings and created a sort of unearthly lucidity of color and forms. The total effect of these paintings is that of a hallucinatory order, a noble vision of reality, a literal *sur*-reality.

Whether it is human vanity or a psychological need for roots that makes us look for ourselves in the past, the exhibition of "The Splendid Century" illumines both the art of that day and of our own. The vitality of its monumental spirit may also enlarge our own views.

Note: The large Albert Ryder retrospective at the Corcoran Gallery (April 8-May 21) in Washington DC offers a look at an intensely original American nineteenth-century painter whose work is of particular interest today.

BETTY KAUFMAN.

Educational

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A Liberal Magazine?

THERE IS A SENSE in which this magazine can only be described as liberal. In this sense, perhaps we should say that we are liberal without the capital "L"—we are liberal in an American rather than a European context. Certainly, many of the goals thought of in America as liberal are our goals, and many of the liberals' battles over the years have been our battles.

We stand for civil rights and for civil liberties, for social justice and racial equality, for international cooperation, for the rights of conscience and the utmost freedom of the human person under law. We support these things, and the means necessary to achieve them. And we have little patience with those Catholics who try to justify their own reluctance to join these battles by citing, out of context, the nineteenth century papal condemnation of continental Liberalism.

Thus it is that we often find ourselves in disagreement with many of our fellow-Catholics, not on matters of faith and morals but on issues involving practical, prudential judgments. An enthusiasm for Generalissimo Franco, for example, seems to be the hallmark of much of the Catholic press in this country, but we have never shared it. In some sections of the Catholic press, almost any right-wing political figure who talks loudly enough seems certain to be hailed as a great and commendable anti-Communist, but again we have always tended to view such men with a certain skepticism, placing more emphasis on deeds than on words.

Hence, we suppose, the designation of The Commonweal as liberal. And in the right context we are proud enough to carry it, even though we would hate to be identified with everything that has been done by some who called themselves liberals—with, for example, those who betrayed freedom by their apologies on behalf of Soviet tyranny before and during World War II. We want no part of such false liberalism, and never did. Instead, this magazine opposed both the Popular Front of the left, proposed by the Communists, and the Christian Front of the right, backed by Father Coughlin and his followers. On this record we would stand, and if taking these positions makes us liberal, we say good enough.

In the future, as in the past, the editors of this magazine will continue, to the best of their ability, to seek after justice and truth in the temporal order. If we are to judge by past experience, our opinions will sometimes be criticized as "too liberal"; at other times they will be damned as "too conservative." But we will always try to avoid the doctrinaire, the pat answer; the opinions that appear will continue to represent what we honestly believe. Our task, as we see it, is twofold: first of all, to stand for truth, and right, and justice, under whatever label they may be found; secondly, to try always to supply that larger context, involving a vision of man and of the meaning of history, without which liberalism and conservatism alike are incomplete.

—from the September 20, 1957 issue

THE COMMONWEAL, 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y.

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